

State Of Montana

Agency Biennial Report Template

FOR FY2010

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DIVISION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CSI remains an agency whose internal IT Department takes care of a majority of our organization's information technology needs. Our small IT staff continues to expand our Oracle database to handle almost every aspect of our business environment. Instead of purchasing packaged software solutions, each application is built to our user's specifications and becomes part of our integrated data management system.

The six goals we have listed in Section 1 of our IT Plan have seen considerable progress, but all of these broadly defined goals remain on-going projects for the agency. The most notable accomplishments for this past year include:

- 1) Expansion of the legal cases tracking system portion of the database
- Increased oversight of the Insure Montana software application that is being developed by an outside contractor (Stone River)
- 3) An updated and improved privacy/confidentiality training package for our employees
- 4) Development of a on-line surplus lines submissions system to replace an antiquated system that was used by an outside contractor
- 5) Increased capabilities involving the interface that the Commissioner of Securities and Insurance (CSI) has with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) in the areas of insurance licensing and on-line premium tax payments
- 6) Continuation and expansion of our on-going effort to scan business documents and store them in a digital imaging system
- 7) Maintenance and upgrading of the desktop environments for our 70+ users

Health Care reform at the national level has a significant impact on the insurance industry and on CSI as the regulator of the insurance industry in Montana. One of the goals (ITG3) in our agency plan was to reduce our reliance on the outside contractor that has developed software for our Insure Montana Program. This is a program that enables Montana's small businesses to pool their health insurance risk and provide affordable health insurance for their employees. As a result of federal healthcare insurance legislation, Montana will be obligated to construct a Montana insurance benefit exchange by the year 2014. Although the Insure Montana program was launched prior to legislation that will construct the exchange, the work that our contractor is doing could transition nicely into the federal exchange setup as it develops. Therefore, our goal of reducing our reliance on the outside contractor has been deferred as we monitor the progress they make in the areas of insurance applications, cost estimates and renewals.

CSI has not worked on any projects that would be part of the IT initiative process, as described in Section 2 of this report, during this past biennium and we have no additional information to report as part of Section 3.

SECTION 1: AGENCY IT PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS — GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal Number 1:

ITG 1 Description: SAO will continue a measured approach for committing to NAIC/NIPR initiatives and their integration with the Montana SAO database. These initiatives promote data interchange with national insurance organizations. NAIC and NIPR are national insurance organizations for insurance regulators.

Benefits: Cooperative effort with all other state insurance regulatory agencies. The insurance industry in Montana benefits as data collection and interpretation become standardized.

Supports State IT Strategic Plan: Goal 5 Improve Government Services.

Supporting Objective

ITO 1-1 Description: Continue to evaluate the ramifications, advantages and disadvantages for integrating NAIC/NIPR initiatives in the Montana SAO

Business Requirements/Problems: Integrating standardized data while maintaining data that is specific to Montana

Benefits: Insurance producers, consumers and other state insurance regulators

Risks: It would be possible to incorrectly evaluate the affects of Montana's participation in some of the national initiatives.

Objective supports IT Goal: Evaluate the initiatives which can benefit Montana. Try to avoid participating in initiatives that contrast with Montana's insurance regulations or produce unnecessary costs to the Montana insurance industry, SAO or the SAO consumer.

Timeframe for completion: ongoing – NAIC/NIPR continue to propose initiatives

Measures: Consider each national initiative and its implications, with input from SAO staff. Successful implementation of a national initiative is measured each time an initiative is completed (or rejected).

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

We continue to evaluate NAIC/NIPR data initiatives as they are proposed by the national organizations. The larger framework here considers the struggle for state versus federal regulation of the insurance industry. While standardization of data collection and reporting make sense, each time a state moves towards a national standard they may jeopardize their state's individual idiosyncrasies and special needs for regulating their state's insurance industry.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Determining Montana's participation in specific NAIC/NIPR initiatives will remain an on-going project.

Supporting Objective

ITO1-2 Description: Build data solutions that interface with national databases and improve communication between the public and members of industry

Business Requirements/Problems: Although our Oracle database is flexible, restructuring or rebuilding the database to integrate with national databases can be difficult.

Benefits: Automation increases productivity for SAO staff and for our consumers

Risks: Loss of day to day stability of SAO database if changes to structure and code aren't properly tested

Objective supports IT Goal: Supports data exchange between Montana and other insurance regulatory agencies

Timeframe for completion: ongoing – NAIC/NIPR continue to propose initiatives and our IT staff continues to improve existing applications that interface with the national databases

Measures: Completion of national initiatives is determined by the national insurance regulatory organizations.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Out IT staff continues to interface our agency's database with national databases. The area that has seen the most progress recently is the licensing of insurance producers. Our out of state producers (non-resident) can use the NAIC site to renew their Montana licenses.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Expanding and maintaining the interface between our agency's Oracle database and the NAIC/NIPR database will remain an on-going project.

Goal Number 2:

ITG 2 Description: IT will continue to expand the agency-wide access to the complete SAO database. This illustrates our agency's commitment to increase information availability and reduce paper flow while protecting sensitive data

Benefits: SAO's employees and SAO's customers will benefit from the increased data availability.

Supports State IT Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Develop IT resources in an organized, deliberative and cost-effective manner and Goal 4: Protect individual privacy and the privacy of information contained within IT systems

Supporting Objective

ITO 2-1 Description: Continue our program of privacy/security training for our employees in their role as employees in a criminal justice agency

Business Requirements/Problems: Making sure that each employee gets annual training and each new employee gets initial training. Occasionally producing fresh training material and keeping training material updated to reflect changes in policies or laws

Benefits: An SAO workforce that has been trained in the areas of privacy and security will have a better understanding of their role(s) in the agency and their responsibilities in working with sensitive data.

Risks: Privacy/security training has to be accurate and timely.

Objective supports IT Goal: SAO employees work for a criminal justice agency and need to have the proper privacy/security training that goes along with that type of responsibility.

Timeframe for completion: SAO recently produced a PowerPoint training module that can be used to train our employees on the topics of privacy and security as they relate to criminal justice and HIPAA. We expect refresher training will occur once or twice a year and new employees will be required to view the training module as part of their agency orientation.

Measures: Employees complete a simple test following training and sign a confidentiality agreement

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

During the past year our agency has developed updated training materials that deal with privacy, confidentiality, criminal justice and email issues. Our legal staff worked in conjunction with our IT staff to review and update a PowerPoint presentation to be used for training. Every employee is required to view the PowerPoint dedicated to these topics and then pass a quiz designed to test their knowledge.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

While this training package is in place now, the PowerPoint will continue to be updated for annual training and will be used as an orientation tool for employees new to the agency. Therefore we will consider this an on-going project.

Supporting Objective

ITO2-2 Description: Develop the full potential of staff by promoting training and cross training on the various parts/capabilities of the SAO production database

Business Requirements/Problems: Need a continuous effort because of employee turnover and changes at the desktop (operating systems, software products, etc.)

Benefits: Utilizing the capabilities of our SAO database will increase communication between employees and their work departments. We will benefit from an organized data source, minimize duplication of effort and reduce paperwork.

Risks: Key personnel may leave the agency without training other SAO personnel in their vital job functions

Objective supports IT Goal: Make sure that SAO personnel are getting maximum benefit from the IT products that are they have available.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Measures: This ongoing effort in tough to measure, but we can verify that staff members are utilizing the capabilities of the database in their everyday activities.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Recently, our legal staff has experienced the greatest benefit from using the features built into our database. During the past year, they have renewed their use of existing features and reports and guided the IT staff in making changes to the application to suit their needs. Cross training remains a difficult area, but instead many of our bureaus have done a better job of documenting their day to day procedures. This gives our agency some continuity in cases where someone leaves the agency or is absent for an extended period of time.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

This is another project that is on-going.

Supporting Objective

ITO2-3 Description: Promote positive communication, cooperation and mutual respect within and among all work units

Business Requirements/Problems: IT can play a vital role in the area of office communications

Benefits: A well organized office information system reduces employee stress and encourages a positive work experience for our employees.

Risks: Risks are present when there is employee turnover or when boundaries aren't well defined for access to data.

Objective supports IT Goal: All members of the SAO staff benefit and therefore our data partners and customers benefit also.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Measures: Again, this is tough to measure, but we can gauge the amount of satisfaction/dissatisfaction that

affects the office that is related to communication/cooperation related to IT.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

One of the areas of ongoing friction in our agency has been the initiation and tracking of referrals to our legal department. Through the use of our Oracle database's features and a renewed dedication to improved office communications, our agency has a much better handle on projects that have been referred to our legal department. While this effort is not complete, we would consider this endeavor approximately 90% done.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

This project is substantially completed.

Supporting Objective

ITO2-4 Description: Protect individual privacy and the privacy of information contained within the SAO IT systems

Business Requirements/Problems: This needs to be a flexible system that delivers data to the SAO staff that need access, but protects individual privacy

Benefits: Continue to build the level of trust that we share with our consumers and the industries that we regulate.

Risks: If the privacy guidelines are too tight, then SAO staff may have a tough time accessing data that they need for their daily work and conversely, if guidelines are too loose then there may unnecessary access granted to private information.

Objective supports IT Goal: SAO handles sensitive information related to insurance and securities investigations and consumer complaints. This data must be protected.

Timeframe for completion: ongoing

Measures: This is best measured by the absence of security/privacy breeches.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Probably the best example of protecting the individual information our agency handles involves our daily data transmissions to the NAIC. The data in these transmissions is encrypted. Meanwhile, we have an ongoing project to remove or protect individually identifiable information from our data files. This project is still developing.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Protecting individually identifiable information will remain an on-going project for our agency.

Goal Number 3:

ITG 3 Description: Transition from our outside contractor, Stone River, for the Insure Montana Project

Benefits: An outside contractor was used to develop this database that is used to administer the Insure Montana project, an insurance alternative for Montana's small business employers. Rather than add an FTE to our small IT shop, we chose to use a contractor for this development.

Supports State IT Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Develop IT resources in an organized, deliberative and cost-effective manner and Goal 3: Improve the Quality of Life of Montana Citizens

Supporting Objective

ITO3-1 Description: Our IT department will stay involved in the Insure Montana database project that our outside contractor is producing

Business Requirements/Problems: SAO has an unfilled IT position that has been open for over a year. Current staff may have less time to stay involved with the contactor's work.

Benefits: Taking ownership of this application will allow us to end the dependency on an outside contractor and let us retain ownership to this function.

Risks: The legislature has provided special funding for the IT component of the Insure Montana program as it has been developed over the past couple of years. Funding is always susceptible to cuts. If our staff doesn't stay involved with the contractor's work, there could be an issue if the contract is suddenly terminated. Note: the 2009 Legislature approved expanded funding for contractor Stone River to install additional capabilities to the Insure Montana data system.

Objective supports IT Goal: If our IT staff stays familiar with the contractor's project, transition away from the contractor should be much easier.

Timeframe for completion: Over the next four years.

Measures: This objective will be met when we release the outside contractor, Stone River, from service.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Our Insure Montana Program has expanded the scope of work with the outside contractor, Stone River. Meanwhile, our staff has become familiar with the project and continues to monitor the contractor's progress. With healthcare reform at the federal level, we expect this insurance program for small businesses will be impacted and the need for the outside contractor will remain.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

The need for the outside contractor has expanded and this will remain an on-going project.

Supporting Objective

ITO3-2 Description: Develop a transition plan for handing off the Insure Montana application to the

SAO IT department

Business Requirements/Problems: this can be a simple plan. Make sure that SAO IT staff has the capability to take over the contractor's database when it is transitioned.

Benefits: Business partners, customers of Insure Montana and Insure Montana staff will not have a negative experience because of the transition from contractor to the in-house data environment.

Risks: Different software products or software release may cause some issues during transition.

Objective supports IT Goal: Make sure that the handoff of this application results in a smooth transition.

Timeframe for completion: This project should be completed during the next two biennium

Measures: This objective can be measured by the lack of transition issues and complaints.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Our staff has become more involved in the oversight of the work that the outside contractor is performing.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

The need for the outside contractor has expanded and this will remain an on-going project therefore the need for a transition plan has been deferred.

Goal Number 4:

ITG 4 Description: Continue to upgrade hardware and software for SAO

Benefits: Newer releases of software usually have added features and reliability. Newer hardware usually runs faster, more reliably and has features (such as CD writers on the PCs or mirroring on the servers) that benefit the employee at the desktop and the agency as a whole.

Supports State IT Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Develop IT Resources in an Organized, Deliberative and Cost-Effective Manner

Supporting Objective

ITO4-1 Description: Evaluate SAO's equipment needs (servers, peripherals and desktops) and replace our older hardware with newer models

Business Requirements/Problems: We have had issues with our communications equipment and the installation of the Microsoft Vista operating system.

Benefits: SAO staff, our data partners and our customers (insurance industry, securities industry and consumers) will benefit.

Risks: Destabilization of IT services at the desktop

Objective supports IT Goal: Make sure that our SAO staff has the IT equipment they need to do their jobs.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Measures: We do an annual survey of each of our user's IT needs at the desktop level. Performance issues are always a concern.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Recently, the guideline for replacing desktop PCs was expanded from a four year cycle to a five year cycle. CSI plans to follow the new guideline and hopefully retain each of our desktop computers for at least the minimum suggested five year period. Meanwhile, we have a couple of servers and a dozen notebook computers that we try to keep on approximately the same schedule. Our peripherals (printers, scanners, etc.) follow roughly the same five year schedule also. CSI's IT staff continually maintains and updates hardware to keep it performing at a level that will satisfy the needs of our users.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Hardware performance analysis and upgrades will remain an on-going project.

Supporting Objective

ITO4-2 Description: Maintain our software to keep our operating systems and desktop applications up to date

Business Requirements/Problems: There are a number of software products that have periodic updates. These include virus protection, Windows operating system, adobe reader or adobe professional, Microsoft office products, Novell and Oracle. We also have specialized audio transcription software, an in-house imaging system, specialized insurance market conduct software and various other specialized software products on some user's desktops.

Benefits: This objective will insure increased employee productivity because of advances in software features and efficiencies.

Risks: Software updates must be done in a timely fashion and software licenses must be tracked and renewed.

Objective supports IT Goal: Improve overall office efficiency by having software that is up to date and reliable.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Measures: Difficult to measure, but progress can be observed by monitoring desktop user's satisfaction with the overall system

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

CSI moved to Microsoft Office 2007 without much trouble during the past year and a half. We have stayed with Windows XP as our default operating system on most of our PCs, but we are currently installing new desktops that run Windows 7. Our IT team is constantly updating our PCs to keep the latest software releases on the machines and our desktops are set up to do automatic updates on products that give us that option.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Software updates remain an on-going project.

Supporting Objective

ITO4-3 Description: Attempt to maximize our IT resources as they are consumed by our individual employees at their desktops

Business Requirements/Problems: Training for individual users on our custom software and packaged software products

Benefits: We realize cost savings for SAO and the State of Montana.

Risks: User's need to know the software capabilities that exist on their desktops. If they aren't properly trained they may underutilize the products that are available

Objective supports IT Goal: Only license software products on individual desktops if the employee uses the product on a regular basis.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Measures: Again, Difficult to measure, but progress can be observed by monitoring desktop user's satisfaction with the overall system

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Like any IT shop, our staff in constantly troubleshooting the day-to-day issues that plague every computer user. Some of these are minor and can be fixed on the spot. Other issues are more complicated and they end up on our IT Issues tracking system, where they get prioritized in relation to other ongoing issues. They remain on the Issues list until there is some kind of resolution. In addition, our IT department does an annual desktop one-on-one visit with each of our employees. During these visits the users are given individual training to help them to better utilize their IT equipment. Also, during these visits the user's software product needs are assessed.

Training for new employees is usually handled within the individual bureaus. A coworker is assigned to act as a mentor to teach new employees how to use their bureau's specific portions of the SAO Production database. Most new hires have basic computer skills, but some use specialized third party software such as NAIC products (I-Site, SERFF) or TeamMate (a software product used for examinations and market conduct purposes). These software products are introduced by the mentor, but additionally we provide training from outside sources in a classroom setting.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Maximizing the value of software resources will remain an on-going project.

Goal Number 5:

ITG 5 Description: Continue to construct the infrastructure and desktop access to the documents that various SAO departments have been scanning into the system (imaged documents)

Benefits: Scanned documents will provide quicker access and SAO will be able to restructure the office

environment to reduce storage of paper documents.

Supports State IT Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Develop IT resources in an organized, deliberative and cost-effective manner and Goal 4: Protect individual privacy and the privacy of information contained within IT systems

Supporting Objective

ITO5-1 Description: Continue the scanning process and development of the infrastructure that will make the scanned images available to SAO staff

Business Requirements/Problems: SAO faces a backlog for scanning historical documents and has a difficult time finding personnel/time to do current scanning while reducing the backlog

Benefits: Using imaged documents versus hard copy has many advantages and increases employee productivity.

Risks: Backup and long term migration plans must be in place to prevent the loss of important documents

Objective supports IT Goal: We hope to complete this project that has been in progress for a while at SAO.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Measures: Reduced use of hard copy documents.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Certain bureaus in our organization have lagged behind in the process of scanning their files of hard-copy documents. Consequently, we have purchased more scanners (including a high volume model) and hired temporary employees to decrease the backlog in those areas that needed assistance.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Another on-going project.

Supporting Objective

ITO5-2 Description: Install access to the imaged documents at the desktop for our users

Business Requirements/Problems: Specialized signons for access into our document imaging server. Improving the search capabilities on imaged documents.

Benefits: As this imaging project moves to completion, all of our employees will have immediate access to the documents that have been scanned into the system.

Risks: Setting protocols for entry and access into the stored images

Objective supports IT Goal: Make sure we have desktop access to imaged SAO documents for all those employees who need access.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Measures: This objective will be satisfied when all SAO users that need access to the scanned files, have access to the image files.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Some of CSI's bureaus have been scanning their work documents for a number of years and they scan current documents on a timely basis. A couple of our bureaus are just starting the process of imaging their documents. We recently purchased a much faster scanner to help reduce the backlog that these lagging bureaus have. The overall document imaging project for the office is approximately 70% completed.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

Scanning CSI's business documents will remain an on-going project.

Goal Number 6:

ITG 6 Description: Build an on line application designed to transition from an outside contractor, PRIM, for handling surplus lines insurance transactions in Montana

Benefits: After discussions with outside IT contractors, our office decided to build an on line application that will gather submissions and renewals of surplus lines insurance information. This paper based function was handled by an outside contractor for the past 15 years. There will be a considerable cost savings by having this function back in the office. There will also be improved capabilities for insurance regulation.

Supports State IT Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Develop IT resources in an organized, deliberative and cost-effective manner and Goal 3: Improve the Quality of Life of Montana Citizens

Supporting Objective

ITO6-1 Description: Our IT department will build an on line surplus lines system that will be integrated with our existing database

Business Requirements/Problems: This is a major project for our small IT staff. Current staff may struggle to develop this project while supporting current functions.

Benefits: Taking ownership of this application and overall program will allow us have better control as a regulator of the surplus lines insurance industry.

Risks: Failure to get our on line system up and running will impact our insurance staff that has been handling this function on an interim basis (still a paper based system).

Objective supports IT Goal: Replace the paper based system with an on line application that tracks surplus lines transactions, collects fees on line and improves reporting capabilities.

Timeframe for completion: Early 2010.

Measures: This objective will be met when we have a surplus lines application functioning.

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

During the past year our IT developed an on-line system for the submission of surplus lines insurance transactions. This application allows surplus lines insurance producers to submit the transactions from their desktops and eliminates the mailing of hard-copy forms. Included in this application is the ability for the

surplus lines producers to view their cumulative transactions for the year and print and year end voucher to use when paying their annual premium taxes to our agency. Our new surplus lines application integrates with insurance agent licensing and insurance company information in our existing Oracle database.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

This application is substantially completed. While some of our surplus lines producers continue to send paper forms, most have switched to the on-line application (this saves the consumers ½% on each policy written). The remaining piece of the application that remains to be finished is on-line payments.

Supporting Objective

ITO6-2 Description: Reduce hard copy forms submission and improve capability for regulatory activities

Business Requirements/Problems: Make sure that the application that our staff constructs is easy to use and accurate.

Benefits: Direct data entry via the Internet will reduce the use of paper forms and on line editing will improve the accuracy of the data being submitted by surplus lines producers

Risks: A slow or bad implementation will have a negative impact with the folks that use the system.

Objective supports IT Goal: Building an on line system will continue the integration of the data within the agency and simplify the process for surplus lines producers.

Timeframe for completion: Early 2010

Measures: This objective can be measured by monitoring feedback from the population of users (surplus lines agents and agencies).

Accomplishments (describe what the agency has done to achieve this objective, list percentage of accomplishment e.g. 50%):

Our Insurance staff is pleased with the control we have over the surplus lines program as a result of the new on-line application. Previously, an outside contractor handled the paper forms and the associated reporting. Our surplus lines producers are pleased with paperless submissions and the fact that they can view/validate their cumulative transactions as soon as they enter the system. They are also pleased that we have gone to annual payment of taxes instead of the cumbersome (often confusing) monthly invoices that were provided by the outside contractor.

Status (completed, substantially completed, deferred, delayed, cancelled, or on-going):

This objective is substantially completed.

SECTION 2: IT INITIATIVES STATUS UPDATE

Complete this section by copy and pasting the IT Initiatives listed in section 7.1 of your agency's 2008 plan. After each initiative, insert the two additional questions for status and funding. Answer these two questions.

2.1 IT Initiatives (Taken from 2008 plan and 2009 update)

Our agency didn't have any IT initiatives for the 2008 plan or 2009 update.

SECTION 3: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - OPTIONAL

Other types of information that your agency may wish to report as accomplishments or challenges related to achieving the Goals, Objectives, and Initiatives outlined in your 2008 IT plan.

N/A.